Availability of gas reserves in Bihar

†1563. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Bihar has expressed the possibility of petroleum products and natural gas reserves in the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State Government has inked an agreement with a foreign company for exploration of petroleum products and natural gas in the identified places of the State to give the said possibility a concrete shape, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Broadly, the geo-tectonic units in Bihar comprise of sedimentary depressions within Ganga Basin to the west and Purnia basin to the east of Monghyr-Saharsa ridge.

(b) and (c) Government of India has awarded and contracted one exploration block namely GV-ONN-2002/1 to M/s Cairn Energy, U.K. on the basis of competitive bidding in the Fourth Round of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) on 06.02.2004. The block is spread over an area of 15,500 sq.km and falls in the districts of Darbhanga Samastipur, Munger, Begusarai, Patna, Khagaria, Saharasa, Bhagalpur and Supaul. Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) for the block has been granted by the State Government of Bihar Exploratory work by the operator has been initiated.

Asian Gas Grid

1564. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of Asian Gas Grid;

(b) if so, the details including the countries associated with it and the pipeline that would cover India as a part of the proposal; and

(c) the present status of the proposal and the envisaged period of completion of the above project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) The idea of an "Asian Gas Grid" linking the North and Central Asian and Gulf Natural Gas producing

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

countries with the consuming countries of Asia was first proposed by the then Minister (P&NG) at the Thrid Asian Gas Buyers's Summit, in New Delhi, on February 14-15, 2005. A presentation on the subject was made by a private international energy consultancy organization at the Ministerial Round Table of North and Central Asian Oil Producers with Principal Asian Consumers, in New Delhi, on 25 November, 2005. The proposal envisaged the setting up of a series of transnational gas pipelines linking Asian producing and consuming contries to form an "Asian Gas Grid". As per the presnetation, 22,000 km. of additional pipelines would have to be set up in Asia, costing about US $22 billion.

Though the Government is pursuing a number of transnational pipeline proposals to import gas from neighbouring countries, there is no concrete proposal pertaining of the Asian Gas Grid before the Government at present.

Supply of Gas to power stations

1565. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that power and fertilizer companies are virtually gas-strapped as his Ministry has told the Ministry of Power that there will be no fresh or additional gas supplies in India till 2008;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this will stall planned power capacities of almost 5000 MWIH in the next two years; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take to supply enough gas to existing gas based power stations that are running below capacity for want of gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) At present, there is a gap between the demand and supply of natural gas in the country. As against the total availability of natural gas of around 92 MMSCMD, including 18 MMSCMD of improted regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG), the estimated demand of natural gas in the country is around 150 MMSCMD. Natural gas is available at APM (Administered Pricing Mechansim) price and at market related prices. While APM gas has been allocated to various units by the Government, the consumer units have to tie up with the gas suppliers directly for non-APM gas. In accordance with the Government policy, all available APM gas is supplied only ot the power and fertilizer sector consumers against their existing allocations along with the sepcific